

**RESOURCE ADVISORY COUNCIL (RAC)**  
**MEETING MINUTES**  
**JULY 23-24, 2001**

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:** Frances WatsonWerner, Glen Collins, Reba Wells Grandrud, Rick Holloway, John Neal, Lorraine Marquez Eiler, Sandra McCullen, Norman Wallen, Steve Saway, David Bertelsen, Ralph Ogden, Joe Lane, and Mark Flint (7/23).

**ABSENT:** Mike Schern, Chris Newell, Lamar Smith, and Mark Flint (7/24).

**BLM STAFF IN ATTENDANCE:** Denise Meridith, Carl Rountree, Don Ellsworth, Bill Civish, John Christensen, Brad Blomquist, Al Burch, Ralph Costa, Roger Taylor, David McIlnay, Merv Boyd, Bill Coulloudon, Ken Mahoney, Jack Ragsdale, Brenda Smith, Deborah Stevens, Linda Garrison and Lori Cook.

**PRESENTERS & GUESTS:** Jay Spehar, Cyprus Amax Minerals Company, Don and Bev Newhouse, Guardians of the Rural Environment, Rich Deery, BLM WO.

**NEXT RAC MEETING:** October 25-26, 2001, Tucson, Arizona; (October 27, 2001, Las Cienegas Dedication.)

**AGENDA ITEM: Call to Order** (France Werner, RAC Chairperson)

**DISCUSSION:** France Werner called the meeting to order the morning of July 23. Introductions were made around the room. Frances opened saying that it was appropriate to have a presentation on 3809. The discussions on both sides will provide the RAC with a better insight on the issues involved. She thanked everyone that came to give a presentation.

**ACTION: N/A**

**AGENDA ITEM: Review of Previous Meeting's Minutes** (Frances Werner, RAC Chairperson)

**DISCUSSION:** Corrections as noted on draft.

**ACTION:** A motion was made by Frances Werner to approve minutes of the May 16, 2001 meeting with the corrections noted. The motion entered by Lorraine Eiler and seconded by Norm Wallen.

**AGENDA ITEM: BLM State Director's Update: Regulations and other Statewide Issues**  
(Denise Meridith, State Director)

**DISCUSSION:** Denise welcomed everyone and stated she was glad to see them here today. Denise introduced Carl Rountree as the new Arizona Associate State Director, who has been permanently with us since April. As I mentioned when he was selected, Carl was the Deputy State Director for Resources in California. He has spent the majority of his career with BLM in California in several key management positions. Prior to working for BLM, Carl was a land use planner for the U.S. Forest Service in Washington D.C. He also worked as a land use planner for the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments in Charleston, South Carolina.

**Oil and Gas Competitive Lease Sale:** The BLM-AZ held an Oil and Gas Competitive Lease Sale for eighty-four parcels last week. Approximately 72,880 acres located in Coconino and Mohave counties were offered through an oral auction. Approximately \$53,227 were received in sale revenues on 18 parcels, comprising 14,142 acres. The highest bidder was Ultimate Construction Inc. from Santa Clara, Utah, at \$3.50 per acre.

**WOW Receives National Award:** The Wonderful Outdoor World (WOW), an urban camping program, was recognized nationally by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE). The honors

garnered WOW with the Award of Excellence in the 2001 "Associations Advance America Awards" program. The WOW program is designed to bring the great outdoors to children in their neighborhood parks, and teach the children a variety of outdoor skills. The ASAE award recognizes associations and industry partners that advance American society with innovative programs in education, skills, training and standard setting.

**HOP Students Attend Cornell University:** Two students from Arizona and New Mexico are currently participating in the Cornell University School of Hotel Administration Summer Honors Program. They were selected for the three-week internship to learn more about hospitality industry and hone their leadership skills. Jose Maldonado from Phoenix, AZ, and Elizabeth Cortese from Ft. Sumner, NM, were sponsored by the Hospitality Pipeline (HOP) and B.E.S.T programs, in which BLM-AZ is an active partner.

**Arizona Rural Fire Assistant Grants Awarded:** The BLM awarded \$405,991 to 32 rural fire departments in Arizona. The Rural Fire Assistance Program enhances the wildland fire protection capabilities of rural fire departments and is one of the key components of the National Fire Plan. Grant proposals were reviewed and selected by a local, state and federal multi-agency team. Emphasis was placed on selecting fire departments that protect rural communities and play a substantial role in protecting federal lands. Eighty six percent of the dollars awarded will purchase additional firefighting equipment and ten percent will be spent on wildland fire training.

**Wildland (Fire) Fuels Treatment:** BLM Arizona has safely and successfully reached the 16,000-acre mark in treating wildland fuels this year. The figure includes actions taken in the wildland/urban interface and other fuel reduction operations. Conditions contributing to acceptable windows of opportunity (weather and other safety factors) have combined to allow interagency wildland fire staff to meet, and occasionally exceed, the optimum acreage goals intended for treatment.

**Land and Water Conservation Funds to Acquire AZ Private Wilderness Inholdings:** BLM Arizona reality staff are working on finalizing three separate acquisitions (35 acres) of private properties from willing sellers within the Wabayuma Peak and Mount Tipton Wilderness areas. The inholdings will be purchased with Land and Water Conservation Funds. Another eight wilderness parcels are awaiting final hazardous materials reports prior to the acquisition process moving forward. (See handout.)

**National Public Lands Day:** BLM is hosting two events this fall. The first is an outdoor fair being held in downtown Phoenix. The Public Land Information Center is coordinating a multi-agency effort to provide exhibits and outreach materials for the public on Friday, September 28. The second event will be a clean up project at Badger Springs in the Agua Fria National Monument on Saturday, September 29. The National Training Center is coordinating the volunteer logistic support. BLM is also hosting a dedication for La Cienegas National Conservation Area on October 27. The occasion will also celebrate 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of designation of BLM Wilderness in Arizona.

**Confirmation of Steve Griles for Assistant Secretary:** Interior Department Secretary Norton announced on July 12, 2001, the bipartisan confirmation of Steve Griles to serve as Deputy Secretary for Lands and Minerals Management. Griles has worked in several key governmental positions. Other appointments include: Bennett Raley of Colorado, as Assistant Secretary for Water and Science; John Keys of Alabama/Utah, as Commissioner for the Bureau of Reclamation; Fran Mainella of Connecticut/Florida, as Director for the National Park Service; and Neal McCaleb of Oklahoma, as Secretary for Indian Affairs.

**Wild Horse and Burro Adoption:** Show Low, Arizona, was the site for a recent adoption. BLM adopted 21 horses and 4 burros. The next adoption will be September 13-16, at the Mohave County Fair. Total adoptions for the year is 245, of which 188 were horses and 57 burros.

**Resource Advisory Council Call for Nominations:** Arizona BLM field managers, Joe Lane the Governor's Representative and I met in June and completed the nominee selection for the five upcoming vacancies on the RAC. Eighteen nominations were received. Out of the eighteen, ten principal and ten alternate were forwarded to Washington. We are hoping the review and approval process will be completed by September 19, 2001.

**El Paso Line 2000 Project:** On July 11, 2001, Washington approved Arizona BLM as the lead for the El Paso Line 2000 Project. The project manager will be out the Phoenix Field Office.

We expect to receive an application for the Sonoran Interconnection Project (the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station to Mexico). The Department of Energy has asked BLM to be a cooperating agency to this project. This proposal has been extremely controversial in the Tucson area since it was initially proposed partly because of its location next to Ironwood National Monument. Indications are we can expect additional controversy related to the Sonoran Desert Monument.

**Land Use Planning:** Our managers will provide a brief status update of their land use plans to you during their presentations today.

**AGENDA ITEM: Presentation on Current Status of 43 CFR 3809 Surface Management**

**Regulations** (Ralph Costa, BLM-AZ LM Mining Engineer; Rick Deery, BLM-WO Solid Minerals Group; Jay Spehar, Senior Landman, Cyprus Amax Minerals Company; Don and Bev Newhouse, Guardians of the Rural Environment )

**DISCUSSION:** Ralph Costa opened by saying the January 20, 2001 regulations are in full force and effect but the deadline for certain mining operators to meet the financial guarantee requirements under these regulations has been extended. Ralph introduced Rick Deery, BLM WO, saying, “Rick is here today to provide you with further information on the regulation”. He then introduced Jay Spehar from Cyprus Amax Minerals Company who provided the industry’s perspective, and Don and Bev Newhouse from Guardians of the Rural Environment who provided an environmentalist perspective.

**Rick Deery** said the new 43 CFR 3809 regulations were implemented on January 20, 2001. These regulations were not suspended by the incoming administration and were in effect for 12 hours prior to the inauguration of George W. Bush. In the period, Dec. 2000-Jan. 2001, the National Mining Association (NMA), State of Nevada, Newmont Mining Inc. (NMI) and Minerals Policy Center (MPC) filed suit over the new regulations. NMA requested that the implementation of the regulations be stayed. Stay was not granted and regulations are in full force and effect. The date for continued court arguments is September 3/4, 2001. In March 2001, BLM requested comments on a possible suspension and reinstatement of previous version of the 3809 regulations. The comment period closed on May 7, 2001. BLM received about 28,000 comments. Most were form letters generated by several websites opposed to the proposed suspension. Most offered no substantive or citation specific comments, or comments that could be explicitly linked to a regulation or citation. There were 100+ substantive comments. Most litigants had something substantive to say. Selected comments include:

- Number of individuals (15-20) indicated that small scale dry washers including motorized (gasoline powered) as well as battery operated, should be allowed as casual use.
- The “*uncertainty*” theme was found in a few company comments. (Placer Dome Exploration.) This refers to the Substantial Irreparable Harm (SIH) standard in the new regulations which could prohibit mining completely in an area.
- EPA comments favored retaining SIH and reclamation bonding provisions.
- Small Business Association argued the final rule violated Administrative Procedures Act (APA) by including SIH without a thorough analysis of benefits and costs.
- Newmont Mining Inc. (NMI), National Mining Association (NMA) and Nevada allege violations of appropriations act rider language which required BLM to comply with the NRC report. They contend that BLM was restricted to simply amending and keeping the bulk of the previous 3809 regulations.
- MPC is arguing for an expanded benefit cost analysis to include impacts on non-mining related business. (APA argument.)
- Nevada, NMA and NMI-rule violates APA - SIH.
- MPC supports SIH and the new performance standards.
- NMI objects to the new performance standards.

Presently, Congress is taking actions on 3809 as well. Currently, the House appropriations bill for the Interior Department, contains a rider that prevents BLM from making any changes to the new 3809

regulations. The bill passed the House by 10 votes. In the Senate, there currently is no rider. Senator Durban has advised Senator Reid to keep the House language. Senator Reid is chairman of the Senate's conference committee. (See Handout)

Jay Spehar presented the view of why the mining industry is opposed to the 3089 new regulations. Mr. Spehar is a Senior Landman for Cyprus Amax Minerals Company in Miami, Globe. The U.S. Interior Department has proposed suspension of the newly-promulgated 3809 regulations and reinstating the pre-existing rules governing hardrock mining on public lands. We fail to understand why moderate House Republicans are being encouraged to criticize the Bush Administration for its pursuit of balance between the important goals of environmental protection and responsible development of our nation's mineral resources. The misinformation campaigns of these republican groups clearly contradict the Congressionally-mandated National Academy of Sciences Study, Hardrock Mining of Federal Lands, and their inaccurate depiction of these issues has served only to confuse the American public.

- The NAS study supports suspension of the new 3809 rules. Congress called for a National Academy of Sciences study to assess the effectiveness of the existing 3809 regulations. The study, "Hardrock Mining of Federal Lands," concluded that the existing array of federal and state laws is generally effective in protecting the environment, and improvements in the implementation of existing regulations present the greatest opportunity for improving environmental protection and efficiency of the regulatory process.
- The new 3809 rules were promulgated illegally. The FY 2000 Interior Appropriations bill prohibited the promulgation of any new 3809 rules except for those "which are not inconsistent" with the recommendations in the NAS study. The new 3809 regulations are clearly inconsistent with the NAS study.
- Industry opponents are "Dead Wrong" when they say suspending the new 3809 rules reverses rules requiring mining companies to pay for clean-up for the sites. NMA's May 7, 2001 comments to the Department of Interior specifically state: "Consistent with the recommendations of the NRC Report that 'financial assurance should be required for reclamation of disturbances to the environment caused by all mining activities beyond those classified as casual use, even if the area disturbed is less than 5 acres', NMA supports the application of financial guarantee requirements to notice level operations. The new rule contains provisions should be retained."
- Industry opponents are "Dead Wrong" when they say the hardrock mining industry is the nation's largest toxic polluter. Under provisions of the Federal Emergency Planning and Community Right-to-Know Act (EPCRA), U.S. mining companies are required to report the volume of materials and substance they move, manage and handle. Because mining and metals companies move a large volume of earth in order to extract metals and minerals, the volume of substances reported to the EPA is corresponding large. The majority of the substances (typically 85 to 99 percent, depending on the operation) reported by mining and metals companies to EPA occur naturally in low concentrations in rock which is moved, processed and managed in safe, designated areas at the respective companies facilities.
- Suspension of the new 3809 rules will NOT change how the placement and disposal of mining wastes is regulated. The placement and disposal of mining wastes is strictly regulated on federal, state, and private lands through the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) and the Clean Water Act as well as numerous state laws and regulations protecting ground water resources. Suspension of the new 3809 rules will not alter the industry's compliance with these important environmental statutes.
- The mining industry is NOT fighting to rollback or lessen any necessary environmental regulations. The mining industry supports and complies with a numerous local, state and federal environmental laws and regulations and supports the addition of any new rules consistent with the recommendations of the NAS study.
- This proposed suspension by BLM demonstrates its pursuit of balance between the important goals of environmental protection and responsible development of our nation's mineral resources. The U.S. hardrock mining industry needs regulatory relief now.

- Permitting delays for new mineral exploration projects and mines were already a major problem, but the new 3809 regulations will make permitting delays intolerable.
- Permitting costs to obtain regulatory approvals from the BLM and other federal and state agencies were already extremely high, but the new 3809 regulations push the regulatory cost burdens ever higher without offsetting environmental benefits, at a time when mineral commodity prices are depressed.
- The new “mine veto” authority in the new 3809 regulations is destroying all remaining incentives to pursue mineral exploration in the western states U.S. Mining companies will not invest the millions of dollars required to discover and develop commercial mineral deposit unless there is some reasonable assurance that they will be allowed to proceed.
- Unnecessarily strict new performance standards and expanded liabilities are created under the new 3809 regulations, which greatly disrupt the pre-existing coordination between BLM and Western States regarding the environmental regulation of mining. A number of the new performance standards are prescriptive, one-size-fits-all requirements that are inconsistent with the NRC’s recommendations that mining regulations should be based on site-specific performance-based standards.
- Severe Economic Impacts - Indirect jobs in manufacturing, light and heavy industry in every district in the nation will be put in jeopardy (see appropriate Dunn & Bradstreet statistical materials.) Interior’s own final environmental impact statement (“EIS”) estimates that up to 6,000 jobs and up to \$877 million in annual mining industry put will be lost as a result of implementation of the final 3809 regulations, and that 70% of this impact will be felt in the State of Nevada. These adverse economic impacts are already being felt in Nevada and the other Western States. Rural communities and county tax revenues for schools, police, and other vital functions are threatened without reason by these rules.

**Don and Bev Newhouse** of the Guardians of the Rural Environment, presented the environmentalist view of 43 CFR 3809 regulations. The Guardians are a non-profit (501 (C) (3) corporation supported by 1200 area residents in Southern Yavapi County with no paid employee or staff; everyone is a volunteer. Their objections to the proposed roll-backs to the 1872 Mining Law are many. The revisions by the prior administration were developed after a four year examination involving expert analysis and public hearings. The industry cries about unemployment at a time when the entire Arizona mining industry only employs about 7,000 persons, the crowd at a highschool football game. Corporations acquire public lands for around \$2.50 an acre and then ravage the landscape removing a mineral by highly toxic chemical technology, a mineral that belongs to all American citizens. The new rules would require adequate bonding to eliminate the current practice of bankrupting the sacrificial sub-company and leaving the damage to water quality and landscape for the taxpayers to try to remedy. Hundreds of millions of dollars and in some cases decades of remediation avoided! What needs further study? The citizens need the new definition regarding the suitability of siting and allowing rejection of irresponsible mines as follows: *“conditions, activities or practices that result in substantial irreparable harm to significant scientific, cultural or environmental resources values of the public lands that cannot be effectively mitigated”*. The old rule said “unnecessary or undue degradation”. This was interpreted to mean that if the only cost effective way to unearth the mineral was to divert a river, demolish a mountain or jeopardize the health and safety of a community then of course it is “necessary”.

Our review is that the viability of a community, reverence for an ancient artifact or maintenance of pristine wilderness are indeed a supreme priority versus the greed and destruction wrought by irresponsible mining. Some areas simply should not be mined. A reality check would show that a 129 year old law that was designed to populate the West and never envisioned modern open-pit, cyanide leach mining is long overdue for even these modest changes. 66% of the citizens of Arizona rank protection of the environment a higher priority than the economy. Let the new rules stand. Just a thought...At dozens of hearings and forums we have never been opposed by other than a “on the clock industry employee”. Thanks for your interest and the work of your Agency. Please read the *Toxic Release Inventory* (on the EPA website) to gain insight as where the problems lies.

A lively discussion with questions and answers followed.

*Glen Collins:* The report that was passed out gives a comparison of the old and new regulations. What is

the key element the industry is opposed to? Answer (David Bertelsen): The old regulations gave the BLM 10 days to accomplish a historical artifact recovery. Now it gives them 30 days. Most of the changes are good for us, with the possible exception of 4-5 areas. EIS estimates a 6% job loss.

*Norm Wallen:* Do you foresee the loss will be mostly to foreign companies. Answer (Jay Spehar): \$877,000, 000 is gained from these companies that also goes into the economy.

*Norm Wallen:* Is this authority consistent with BLM's authority that they already have? Answer (Ralph Costa): It provides BLM with veto power. Under old regulations we could not veto any claims; under the new regulations, yes, we can.

*Frances Werner:* With the increased rural growth the public needs to be informed about regulations that apply to mining operations.

**ACTION:** N/A

**AGENDA ITEM: Summary of the Administration's Energy Policy** (Al Burch, BLM Renewable and Minerals Resources)

**DISCUSSION:** Shortages of energy supplies and the prospect of deterioration of energy transportation infrastructure prompted the current administration to develop a National Energy Policy. President Bush named a National Energy Policy Development Group in his second week in office. It is chaired by Vice President Cheney and is composed of seven secretaries, six agency directors and assistants to the President. The Policy Development Group produced a report on May 16, 2001, that assessed the current energy situation and outlined recommendations for a National Energy Policy. The President issued Executive Orders 13211 and 13212 on May 18, 2001, which stated the fundamentals of the National Energy Policy. The orders were derived from the National Energy Policy Development Group report.

The Executive Orders directed federal agencies to:

- Expedite projects that will increase the production, transmission, or conservation of Energy.
- Expedite the review of permits or take other actions necessary to accelerate the completion of projects while maintaining safety, public health and environmental protections.
- Establish an interagency task force, chaired by the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality, to monitor and assist agencies in setting up mechanisms for this coordinated effort.
- Prepare a Statement of Energy Effects that shows agency proposed actions (e.g., proposed regulations) that are likely to have an adverse effect on the supply, distribution or use of energy.

BLM Actions:

- BLM convened meetings May 31 and June 1, 2001, to begin developing an internal action plan that would begin to address the Presidential directives.
- Draft recommendations were prepared for the Executive Leadership Team meeting on June 5, 2001.
- BLM is currently working on the draft national action plan. Washington Office tells us it is in the final stages of compilation.

Effects on Arizona BLM:

- AZ is not a large producer of energy compared to states like Montana or Wyoming. However, the state is a potential energy producer, and the National Energy Policy could spur more exploration (see handout map).
- Oil and gas is produced from 39 wells, and coal is produced from 2 mines on Navajo and Hopi lands., The oil and gas leases and wells are administered by our New Mexico Farmington Field Office through an agreement with the AZ BLM. We assist the tribes and the BIA in the administration of the coal mines.
- Additionally, the AZ BLM administers 48 active oil and gas leases on public lands. We just sold 18 parcels in a recent oil and gas sale as mentioned in the State Director's report. Only one company is currently drilling.
- AZ is being explored for its carbon dioxide, uranium, and geothermal energy potential (see handout map).

- The greatest effect of the National Energy Policy on AZ will likely be the development of infrastructure (pipelines, railroads, power lines) to transmit fuel to power plants and transmit resultant power to available markets. The May 22, 2001, AZ Republic reported that 11 power plants currently are planned for AZ.
- AZ also is ripe for research and development of renewable energy sources like wind farms, solar farms and biomass facilities.
- Net effect of the National Energy Policy is the increased interest in AZ as a producer of both nonrenewable and renewable energy and as a transportation corridor for infrastructure.
- AZ BLM land use plans will need to consider the issues surrounding development of energy-related infrastructure.

**ACTION:** N/A

### **AGENDA ITEM: The Arizona National Landscape Conservation System Strategy**

(Ken Mahoney, BLM Wilderness/NLCS Coordinator and RAC Members)

**DISCUSSION:** Had a good Recreation and Tourism Group meeting this morning. We reviewed the draft Arizona National Landscape Conservation System Strategy. The BLM is responsible for managing five National Monuments and three National Conservation Areas in Arizona. These areas together with 47 designated wilderness areas, two wilderness study areas, and part of one National Historic Trail, make up AZ's share of the NLCS, a nationwide collection of special landscapes that also includes Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Scenic Trails on BLM lands. All totaled, about 3,240,000 acres of Federal public lands or 23% of the BLM managed lands in AZ are in the NLCS. Had a lot of good comments at this morning's meeting. Main concern of the group is that the public understands the hierarchy. Mark Flint will help re-work the introduction to provide less government talk with more plain talk so that people will read more easily the booklet. This is what we are trying to achieve. Areas to cover will be: visitor service and safety, resource protection, outreach and volunteers as well as planning.

*David Bertelsen:* We really need a high quality document that people will buy; stakeholders are interested in this type of document.

*Sandee McCullen:* We need to take the government language out of the publication and describe what BLM is trying to do (in a cover sheet give the greater picture).

*Steve Saway:* Why isn't BLM listing the wilderness areas for people? At this time, the focus is on the National Conservative Areas and Monuments and BLM does have a website and fact sheet on the wilderness areas. There are a couple very good books already written on the wilderness areas, so would it be really reproductive for us to publish another book on the same information? Would it benefit us; could we sell the book to make a profit?

*Ken Mahoney:* Because there are some good guidebooks that cover BLM's Arizona Wilderness areas, I don't think it would be productive for us to publish another book on that topic. The list of wilderness areas is included in the folder containing the NLCS fact sheets and could be reproduced for the public strategy document, if needed.

*Rick Holloway:* This document needs to be cost recovery. (Rick and Norm discussed the need for cost recovery. The RAC also feels cost recovery is important.)

*Norm Wallen:* RAC needs to consider access to wilderness areas. At present many are through private lands.

*Don Ellsworth:* We have an access guide for the wilderness areas.

*RAC response:* They would like a list of the wilderness areas in the strategy document.

### **DAY 2, July 24 (Brenda Smith, Facilitator, Kingman FO; Lori Cook, Recorder, Yuma FO.)**

**OPENING REMARKS (Frances Werner, Chair):** The meeting started at 8:00 a.m. with Frances Werner welcoming everyone to the second day, and gave a brief recap of previous day's meeting discussions.

## **AGENDA ITEM: SD's 2002 Priorities** (Carl Rountree, Associate State Director)

**DISCUSSION:** BLM AZ is currently working on workforce planning. We held workforce planning sessions during the last few months to obtain a better idea of where we are and what resources and skills will be needed in the future. Some states, such as California, have spent numerous hours on State Director (SD) priorities planning. A main topic of workforce planning was "What are the Bureau's priorities"? Copies of the Bureau's BLM Priorities Plan document are available for those interested. We are enlisting your help today by asking what you think should be part of the SD 2002 Priorities so we can focus on those priorities, and clearly articulate in a document to the public where the Bureau is coming from and to help them understand what these priorities are. Partnerships are a high interest for us.

The RAC participated in a brainstorming session; the results were as follows:

- Statewide coordination with other agencies to educate public about land stewardship
- Land Ethics
- Cooperation between management and government entities
  - Land management planning with cities, counties on planning
  - SW Strategy
- Inventory and monitoring of resources
- Public awareness of cost
- Partnerships with cost recovery
- Implementation of OHV guidelines
  - OHV Coordinator (Off-Highway Access Coordinator)
  - Go beyond Arizona borders
- Skill mix for managing monuments
  - Particularly recreation management and planning
  - Manpower, budget and costs
- Volunteer Program to assist in:
  - Public education, Monitoring, Law Enforcement, Partnerships, Disseminate information; Tie in with schools
- Border issues
  - Standard and Guidelines: share general information with border States
- Intensive program with schools
- Law enforcement
- Energy Planning
- Look at where to improve access to public lands
- Standard and Guideline implementation
  - Keep program on grazing going
  - Emphasize health of the land
- National Monument Program
  - Information, public understanding and management
- Status of management planning and Wilderness Plans

## **AGENDA ITEM: Field Office Rangeland Resource Team Member Proposals**

**DISCUSSION:** None

**ACTION:** N/A

## **AGENDA ITEM: Reports From BLM Field Managers**

**Safford Field Office (SFO), Bill Civish**

- Students Complete Internship: a graduation ceremony held at the San Carlos Apache Tribe's Point of Pines forest camp marked the end of a month-long internship for six high school students. The



Southeastern Arizona Cultural Internship Program, a partnership Program between the BLM Safford Field Office, City of Safford, Graham County, Phelps Dodge, and San Carlos Apache Tribe, provide students with a chance to learn about a variety of careers with their sponsors. Students received a \$600 stipend and \$500 college scholarship. The interns also assisted with BLM projects, such as graffiti removal at the historic Sanchez Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp, water measurements at Bonita Creek, pond improvements at Hot Wells Dunes Recreation Area, and campsite rehabilitation at Aravaipa Canyon Wilderness.

- Fire Facility Tour: hosted an open house and tour of its airport fire facility for elected officials and business leaders. The tour showcased the single-engine air tanker (SEAT) base and helibase, along with BLM's airport dispatching facility. SEAT performed an aerial drop and engine crew members demonstrated a hose lay. The tour was a success and helped to demonstrate the importance of the BLM's fire facilities to the local community.
- San Simon Watershed collaborative efforts: project is funded by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality grant, and is expected to begin this summer or early autumn. The project should result in reduced erosion from ranch roads in the Sam Simon Valley. A Quality Assurance Plan was established under the leadership of Thatcher High School science teacher, Dave Henson, who is also an educational consultant. Mr. Henson will handle monitoring and data recording for the project, and has developed and installed an innovative new sediment monitoring device to use in the sediment transport areas of the project. BLM archaeologists will perform cultural clearances as part of this partnership with the Coronado Resource Conservation and Development, San Carlos/Safford/Duncan Watershed Group, and local rancher Peter Brawley.
- Hot Well Dunes Recreation Area, Watchable Wildlife Picnic Area addition: BLM received a grant from AZ State Parks to make improvements over a two-year period at Hot Wells Dunes Recreation Area. These improvements included an enlarged pond, restrooms, picnic sites, nature trail, parking area, signs and an entrance road upgrade. The pond has been enlarged and refilled with water; a parking area, walkways and barriers have been installed, and restrooms completed. Supplies for three picnic sites and a new information Kiosk have been purchased. The project is on schedule for completion within allocated funding. Contact Tom Schnell, Outdoor Recreation Planner, for more information at 928-348-4420.
- Redfield Canyon Wilderness Inholding Purchase: BLM received permission to use Land and Water Conservation Funds (LWFC) to purchase private lands in Redfield Canyon Wilderness from willing sellers. Sale is pending final reviews and approval for 640 acres from The Nature Conservancy. This project is scheduled to be completed this summer.
- Interstate Fiber Optic Projects: Three projects are nearing completion that cross public lands from Texas, New Mexico, Arizona to California. AT&T received their Notice to begin construction of their Fiber Optic Line and is plowing lines into the ground now. El Paso and Valley Telecommunications are both close to completing evaluation and permit process.
- Dos Pobres/San Juan Proposed Copper Mine (near Safford): since publication of the Draft EIS for this project, BLM and others have been addressing comments, coordinating with other agencies and interested parties, reviewing and editing the Final EIS. BLM is meeting with Gila River Indian Community and San Carlos Apache Tribe to discuss comments and gather conformation for this project.

**Tucson Field Office (TFO), David McIlnay (Acting Manager)**

- Las Cienegas Conservation Plan: finished the draft version and is now at Printing Shop. NOA to WO - told to get meetings set and printer to start printing. The community planning efforts were remarkable. The community has given them full support.
- Ironwood: Pre-plan is done. Inventory work to be started soon. NOA to prepare and waiting to print. Was able to put the local rancher at ease to learn the information that took place during the field trip we had. We are building partnerships and gaining community support.
- San Pedro: Completed Standard and Guideline review for this year; went well. Is extremely important. Will be writing up results and meetings with the assistance of RRT.
- Law Enforcement Rangers: Have four more on board; two of which will be assigned to Ironwood Monument. Having discussions on the ASARCO mining. Working on right of ways; continuing with the Fiber Optic work. Continuing to attend Middle Gila meetings that are supported by the RAC.

- My detail as Acting Field Manager for the Tucson Field Office will expire shortly. I have enjoyed working with the Tucson staff, the State Office and other field offices, RAC Council members and community partnerships, and feel we have accomplished many of management's goals.
- Concern: The Route inventory has been discussed for over a year now. There has been some discussion not to use the Enterprise Team. Believe to be involved in the process of the inventory is crucial. The Enterprise Team will bring consistence to the program, they are able to do the routing and mapping. The one limitation could be that there may be a held up down the road in meeting the deadline with only one team working on the inventory. There should be enough money to fund more than one team.

**Lake Havasu Field Office (LHFO), Don Ellsworth**

- Acquisitions: currently working on a 360 acre purchase in the Dead Mountain Wilderness in California. Also in the completion stages of purchasing 40 acres in the Rawhide Wilderness, in La Paz County, AZ.
- Land Use Planning: pre-plan for our new Resource Management Plan has been approved. The Team Leader will be on board next week. Conducted one Collaborative Community Based Partnership in Lake Havasu City, will be conducting two more: one in Bullhead City and one in Parker this fall. As part of this RMP we will right three wilderness plans.
- Deferred Maintenance: completed six restrooms this year, one at the Colorado River Nature Center and the others at day use areas on the Parker Strip. The bank stabilization project at Empire landing was also completed.
- Bullhead City Gun Club, AZ Game and Fish Department filed an application for an RP&P lease for a shooting facility in Fort Mohave Valley. The federal went out and we are receiving comments. The State Land Department is opposed to the site, they want the site at least two miles form any state land.

*Question:* Have you looked at any large areas that can pull all of the recreation functions together (such as a shooting facility, OHV area, rock crawling areas, etc)? Believe AZ has the land available to develop a recreation area that can put all these things into one area.

*Response:* The State Land Department's hands are tied because by law, and can't exchange land. Until we can get the people of AZ to approve a vote to give us the authority, our hands will remain tied. One thing that can be done, however, is to rebuild relationships.

**Arizona Strip Field Office (ASFO), Roger Taylor**

- Planning: efforts will cover the entire AZ Strip; will result in three stand alone plans, one for each National Monument and one of the remaining non-monument portion of the Strip. A joint agreement has been established with National Park Service (NPS) and Lake Mead NRA for the Grand Canyon Parashant National Monument. Hired a Planning Team Leader and most of the core team through a joint BLM/NPS team. Working extensively with our public and private partners through the AZ Strip Alliance which Roger co-chair's with Coconino County Supervisor Paul Babbitt. Held Community Based Partnership session last spring. Will start public scoping meetings this fall. Issues will probably center around wilderness study areas, route designations, and ecosystem restoration. There are several inventory efforts going on, a BLM route inventory and through privately conducted contracts, campsites, cultural and threatened and endangered plant inventories.
- Heaton Acquisition: working with The Construction Fund to acquire 400 acres of private land and the associated water and grazing rights. Is important to us because of the water rights and also a portion of the grazing allotment lies within the Mount Trumbull Ponderosa pine ecological restoration project.
- Paria/Coyote Buttes: increasing hiking permits for the North Coyote Buttes area to 20 per day. Mt. Trumbull Schoolhouse: reconstruction is nearly completed. Those who burned the building went to trail in Mohave County, have been found guilty and two of the three sentenced to jail time, plus probation and restitution. The leader has yet to be sentenced; probably will get a stiffer sentence.
- Sante Fe Mineral Acquisition: have had some discussion with the Sante Fe railroad. They are interested in selling all mineral estates they own within the Grand Canyon Parashant National Monument; totals approximately 65,000 acres. Have submitted a Land and Water Conservation Funding request and it looks like we might get funding in FY-2002.
- National Monument Management: Have hired Rangers for both the Parashant and Vermilion Cliffs

National Monuments. They will have a presence on-the-ground providing public contact and visitor services/safety.

- Mohave Desert Road Designation: moving forward with the implementation of the 1997 RMP amendment. One of the decisions from the amendment required us to go through a route designation process. We are trying to tie AZ and Utah BLM together on this issue, because of RS2477 issues on Utah we are going to have to drop Utah's portion and move forward. Will start with a series of public meetings this coming summer.
- An alligator has been found in the lower Mojave area, Pakoon Springs. The AZ Game & Fish is handling its capture and removal.

**Yuma Field Office (YFO), Merv Boyd (Acting Manager)**

- Sears Point Area of Critical Environmental Concern: a pending land acquisition has generated significant interest. There is outstanding educational historic and pre-historic properties values. Private inholdings and some land is owned by the AZ Game & Fish. The proponent would acquire inholdings to be used in exchange for other federal parcels. Have also proposed the use of Land and Water Conservation Fund for additional acquisitions.
- Significant interest from the City of Yuma for a joint venture in ecotourism to tie to Yuma Crossing National Heritage Area. Also Muggins Wilderness inholdings.
- Burro gathers: completed in late May; target was 150, gathered 151. (101 animals in AZ, 10 from Squaw Lake and 40 from Picacho State Park vicinity).
- Colorado River Zone Fire Organization which eight agencies administrators (includes BIA, BLM, U.S.Fish and Wildlife) are meeting to reorganize command structure and standardize fire position descriptions, duties and grades of crews. Will complete all WUI and prescribed fire projects planned for FY 2001.
- Working with the Southwest Strategy and California Biodiversity Councils. Yuma FO will host a meeting in Yuma in March 2002.
- Yuma Resource Management Plan (RMP): completed initial learning communities exercise. Working on prep-plan and will forward to WO for funding. Have tied it to Multi-Species Conservation Plan. Will also coordinate with Bureau of Reclamation as they work on their RMP for the 5-mile zone along the U.S./Mexico border.
- Energy related issues: Working with Mexico on the Baja North Pipeline. Amendments would be required in California and Arizona on the Land Use Plan. Will bring natural gas from Ehrenberg, AZ to southern California. Also working with the Colorado River Indian Tribe on the Baja pipeline. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has the lead; BLM has been asked to be a cooperating agency. Wellton Mohawk Irrigation District has proposed a new power plant.
- Salvinia Molesta Noxious Weed Invasion: Environmental Careers Organization employees working with Palo Verde, Irrigation and Bureau of Reclamation. Have treated 7-miles of the Palo Verde drain; seems to be less than last year in Lower River.
- Border Issues: 14 people from one group of illegal immigrants died on the Barry Goldwater Range in May. Other group members were rescued by BLM, Border Patrol and Yuma County sheriff's office. After the rescue effort was completed, we organized a meeting with local federal, state and county law enforcement agencies to discuss action by a group calling themselves the Land, Sea and Air Rescue Group. Members of the group interfered with the search and rescue operation, and have no authority to conduct searches. This is a real concern to all agencies and we developed a plan to manage future incidents.
- Long Term Visitor permit fee is increasing from \$100 to \$125.

**Kingman Field Office (KFO), Brad Bloomquist (Acting Manager)**

- I am here today representing John Christensen, our Field Manager. John's father has passed away and John and his family have gone to Utah to be their relatives.
- No new planning efforts are planned at this time.
- Fire season has been quiet so far; extra fire crews are on-board and ready to go if necessary.
- Big Sandy Project is moving along; BLM staff is doing all we can.

- Working with ADOT on Highway 63 and 93; partnering with ADOT on the project; it's going well.
- Continuing work on moving into a new building.
- Have had recent requests for commercial/competitive OHV events from Las Vegas promoters.

**Phoenix Field Office (PFO), Jack Ragsdale (Acting Manager)**

- Standards and Guidelines update: will be issuing 8 out of the 9 expiring grazing permits this fiscal year. The one exception (Chambers Allotment) is in an estate litigation and will be issued when it is settled and a transfer is completed.
- OHV Inventory: will continue with the road inventory via the Forest Service (Recreation Solution) Enterprise Team, a quasi-government company. Priority is on the Sonoran Desert National Monument, with the Lake Pleasant and Bumble Bee areas, next. The Agua Fria National Monument (AFNM) inventory has been completed.
- Clem Allotment Impoundment: plan to implement the impoundment this Thursday, July 26<sup>th</sup>, approximately 45 miles west of Phoenix (see attached briefing paper).
- Planning: Bradshaw/AFNM is completed. Prep-plan has been completed; obligating dollars for Request for Proposal with the contractor. Successful prescribed burn at AFNM, 7,000 acres.
- Monuments: Karen Kellerher is being assigned to the Sonoran Desert NM planning position.
- Bumble Bee Appeal Status: a hearing with the Administrative Law Judge has been scheduled for August 14-16, 2001 at 9:00 a.m. at the Prescott Resort in Prescott, AZ. The hearing is the result of the Bumble Bee Permittee's (Jerry Collings) appeal of the PFO decision to implement a winter season of use and reduce the stocking rate to improve riparian conditions. The Permittee has proposed an alternative that is being negotiated with the BLM in an attempt to reach an out-of-court settlement. If an agreement can be reached, a new decision will be issued subject to the Administration Law Judge's approval. Any settlement agreement or proposal would be subject to consultation with interested parties. Preparations for the hearing are ongoing concurrent with negotiations with the Permittee. Can not go into details of case due to ongoing litigation.
- Working on an acquisition of 320 acres of private land (Oswald property) adjacent to Big Horn Wilderness area.
- Wild Horse and Burro Adoptions: completed 7 adoptions, working on 2 more adoptions; adoptions total approximately 300 animals.
- Humane Borders: met with a representative of the group. Identified several areas in the Ajo area that could be used for water stations.

**AGENDA ITEM: Reports from the Standards and Guidelines Working Group; RAC Discussion on Rangeland Resource Team's Progress (Lamar Smith, Chair)**

**DISCUSSION:** None; Chairperson Lamar was not present.

**ACTION:** N/A

**AGENDA ITEM: Report From the Public Relations Group (Glen Collins, Chair)**

**DISCUSSION:** The RAC Notes newsletter is published several times each year reporting on the activities of the RAC and is sent to 2000 people, including the livestock grazing leasees and permittees, and many public land interest groups. The RAC will need to select a new Chair of the Public Relations Working Group.

**AGENDA ITEM: Report From The Recreation and Tourism Working Group (Glen Collins, Chair)**

**DISCUSSION:** There is a lot of interest in recreation and tourism activities within the RAC as evident by the many RAC members attending the working session earlier this morning on the publicity document on the National Landscape Conservation System in Arizona. The Working Group offered many comments and suggestions to help Ken Mahoney, BLM National Landscape Conservation System Coordinator, with

preparation of the document, and Mark Flint will prepare a redraft of part of the text.

Many of the Recreation and Tourism Working Group members continue to participate in the land use planning activities of the Middle Gila Conservation Partnership (MGCP) which is a community based planning effort on BLM and State Trust lands in the Florence area. The MGCP project, which was initiated by the RAC last year, has brought together representatives of the State Land Department, AZ Game and Fish, National Park Service, local governments, OHV and other public land interest and user groups, and local citizens to study and make land use recommendations for recreation and other public and resource uses on the large and scenic area east of Florence. The State Department has joined the BLM in being very committed to the MGCP planning effort.

**ACTION: N/A**

**AGENDA ITEM: Report from Wild Horse and Burro Working Group (Frances Werner, Chair)**

**DISCUSSION:** The work group met on the morning of July 23 with eight RAC members, three field managers, Al Burch and Debbie Stevens in attendance. Al Burch presented information on the implementation of the Action Plan developed two years ago. (See handout.) As of July 16, it appears that this years target for adoptions will not be met (67%); this years target for removal stands at 87%. The census for six Herd Management Areas (HMAs) has been completed. The largest area (Three Rivers) showed 679 animals over Appropriate Management Level (AML). Eight other areas showed 297 burros and 10 horses over AML. The AML is exceeded by 55% (976 animals). At present there are 380 animals in corrals waiting to be adopted and 165 have been shipped.

National Program Initiatives: Arizona Expects to reach AMLs in four years. Census Techniques are being explored and modified (count/recount). Dave Little, on special assignment, facilitated the dialogue between AZ Game and Fish and BLM; protocols now reviewed by Dr. Francis Singer, USDI, Biological Research Center. Agencies are working together. Regional Programmatic Environmental Agency is being developed for flight operations over wilderness areas, critical E/S, threatened and endangered habitat and sensitive wildlife habitat (California BLM, Game and Fish, state and field offices). Public needs to be informed of operations early. Humane Society interested in over-population of animals, and are talking publically. New memos have been issued regarding euthanizing animals; it's a breakthrough. Budget adequate currently; future is unknown.

ISSUES: Kingman corral: has no funding, is still on hold (State Land Department lease renewal, if changed to commercial is too expensive). Cost of new facilities, estimate plus/minus a million (for wells, corrals, etc.)

MONITORING USE: Vital-basis of original Herd Management Areas? However, some of the historical information has been lost, so it must be revisited. The strategy and implementation plan calls for an update of the appropriate management levels and update by 2004. Monitoring will provide basis to defend numbers of animals. Costly exercise. Grazing standards and guidelines apply to burro areas.

SAFETY: Huge issue in Lake Havasu area with five accidents this year. Highway 95 splits HMA. Should the HMA be zeroed out because of traffic or would signs suffice?

MARKETING: Adoptions down because of changing demographics and life style. Adoption of burros is not the complete, long term answer for reaching appropriate management level numbers. Phoenix Field Office has had some adopted animals returned because the buyer was unable to take care of them. Need ideas about increasing alternatives to adoptions (sanctuaries). Need to get accurate costs of adoption program. AZ BLM will conduct a cost analysis and provide this information to the RAC after gathering data for a year. After accurate cost data is acquired, the public can be made aware of the cost and perhaps offer alternative solutions. A suggest was made that the RAC Notes be used to make the public aware of this issue.

**ACTION: N/A**

**AGENDA ITEM: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

**DISCUSSION:** None

**ACTION:** N/A

**AGENDA ITEM: RAC Discussion of Future Meetings/Location**

**DISCUSSION:**

- T International Border Issues
- T OHV Strategy Update on the agreement to be signed in August
- T Mojave Desert Road and Designation
- T Las Cienegas

**ACTION:** Next meeting will be Oct. 25 -26, Field Trip to Tucson, AZ. Will start at 1:00 p.m. on Thursday, the 25, with a business meeting; Saturday, the 27, attend the Las Cienegas Dedication.

**AWARDS PRESENTATION**

Awards were presented by Denise Meridith to RAC Members who's terms will be expiring in September. Glen Collins, Reba Grandrud, Rick Holloway, Mike Schern and Mark Flint were recognized for their outstanding leadership and participation on the RAC. Glen and Reba have been members of the RAC, since it was first established in 1995. Rick and Mike have been members since 1999, and Mark completed a one-year term, filling behind Ralph Quick. Denise praised their commitment to the RAC and natural resource management in Arizona

**MEETING ADJOURNED**